

U.S. SAYS IT FEARS PHILIPPINES FACES A WIDE CIVIL WAR

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 30 — The United States said today that the Philippines was headed toward "civil war on a massive scale" within a few years unless the Government made drastic internal changes.

Officials of the State Department and the Defense Department, testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said that while a Communist insurgency was not close to toppling the Government of President Ferdinand E. Marcos, trends pointed to a military stalemate in as few as three years.

In the long run, the officials said, the unwillingness of President Marcos to clean up the political system, professionalize the military and break up business monopolies could lead to a collapse in the Philippines and deal a blow to Western interests.

Most Dire Predictions by U.S.

The assessments were made by Paul D. Wolfowitz, an Assistant Secretary of State, and Richard L. Armitage, an Assistant Secretary of Defense, both of whom have been involved in Philippine affairs. They gave the most dire estimates of the situation yet made by the United States Government.

Senate sources said an even more pessimistic forecast was contained in a study by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that has not yet been made public.

The Senate study, based on assessments by civilian and military intelligence agencies, was said to predict that, in the absence of changes, civil unrest brought on by economic decline and mounting anti-Marcos sentiment would bring down the Government within three years.

Ultimate 'Chaos' a Possibility

The sources said the study did not say whether Mr. Marcos was then likely to be replaced by Communist insurgents, by the democratic opposition or by "chaos."

Senator Dave Durenberger, Republican of Minnesota, who is chairman of the intelligence committee, recently told an interviewer for National Public Radio that if the negative trends continued, American intelligence agencies might have to take "other action."

Mr. Durenberger declined to specify what action he had in mind, but he said that during the Carter Administration intelligence agencies were not used to help organize an alternative to the Sandinista rebels to take power in Nicaragua when the Government of Anastasio Somoza Debayle fell in 1979.

"We don't intend to make that mistake in the Philippines, the President doesn't intend to make that mistake," Mr. Durenberger said.

Mr. Wolfowitz, the State Department official, said today's testimony was an effort to send a signal of alarm to Mr. Marcos, to drive home a message that American diplomats have delivered in private.

The statements of the Administration officials were greeted with an outpouring of frustration from senators.

"Our patience is running out," said the committee chairman, Senator Richard G. Lugar, Republican of Indiana, who has been supporting requests for military and economic aid to the Philippines. "I don't think President Marcos has got the word."

Mr. Wolfowitz said the Administration was now taking a "more hard-nosed" approach to the conditions it attaches to aid. But he said a cutoff would make matters worse by weakening the Philippine military and possibly forcing it to supply itself by commandeering supplies from civilians.

He said a combination of pressures from the United States, international lenders, and forces for change in the Philippine legislature and the military offered the best hope that the Philippines can withstand the insurgency.

Mr. Wolfowitz said Mr. Marcos's response to American pressure had been "inadequate and disappointing," adding that "each month that is wasted or used badly" allows the insurgents to build momentum.

He said that the insurgents' New People's Army, estimated by Pentagon officials as having 16,500 soldiers and many more active supporters, did not have the strength to overthrow the Government, but that the situation could reach a military stalemate in three to five years, resulting in "a civil war on a massive scale."

One committee member, Senator Alan Cranston, Democrat of California, suggested that Japan, South Korea, Australia and other prosperous Pacific allies be enlisted in an aid program for the Philippines conditioned on domestic changes.

Other senators, including Christopher J. Dodd, Democrat of Connecticut, and John F. Kerry, Democrat of Massachusetts, said the United States should use leverage by threatening to cut off aid.

Congress has so far been reluctant to cut the aid program. On Tuesday one Senate subcommittee voted down an effort to cut military aid for the current year from \$70 million to \$40 million, and another panel declined to cut \$104 million earmarked for improvements at two United States military bases in the Philippines.

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